IN THE CLAIMS

1-16. (cancelled)

17. (currently amended) ~~An entertainment~~A system for distributing content data, comprising:

a data server; and

a plurality of data terminals, each operable to receive content data from said ~~a~~ data server, the content data including at least one of reproducible program content data or executable program content data, each of said plurality of data terminals being operable to perform at least one of reproducing a program including at least one of audio or video from the reproducible program content data, or executing a program using the executable program content data in accordance with input from a user,

wherein said data server is operable to distribute ~~transmit~~ the content data to ones of said plurality of data terminals over an electronic data network in accordance with respective user-set content distribution schedules set by distribution requests of users of said ones of said plurality of data terminals, and is operable to determine whether the electronic data network is congested before distributing the content data, such that when the data server determines that ~~in an order of transmission at least partly determined by at least one of: a plurality of priorities assigned to users of said plurality of data terminals, or a state of congestion of~~ the electronic data network is not congested, the data server distributes the content data to said ones of said plurality of data terminals according to the respective user-set content distribution schedules.

18. (currently amended) The ~~entertainment~~ system as claimed in claim 17, wherein said data server further includes a

database storing ~~the~~ a plurality of priorities assigned to users of said plurality of data terminals, said data server being further operable to access the stored priorities in determining ~~the~~ an order of ~~transmission~~distribution.

19. (currently amended) The ~~entertainment~~ system as claimed in claim ~~17~~18, wherein the plurality of priorities includes a first priority and a second priority and when ~~the state of congestion of~~ said data server determines that the electronic data network is congested, said data server is operable to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data in the order of ~~transmission~~ distribution to a first set of said plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a first priority before said data server ~~transmits~~ distributes the content data to a second set of said plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a second priority.

20. (currently amended) The ~~entertainment~~ system as claimed in claim 17, wherein each of said plurality of data terminals is operable to receive selection input from a respective user for selecting a program and to request the user-selected program from said data server, and said data server is operable to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data corresponding to the user-selected program to said one of said plurality of data terminals which requests the user-selected program according to the user-set content distribution schedule of the respective user.

21. (currently amended) The ~~entertainment~~ system as claimed in claim 20, wherein the content data corresponds to a plurality of independent selectable programs, said data server includes a storage unit operable to store the content data, and said data server is operable to select the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from the content data stored in said

storage unit and to ~~transmit~~ distribute the selected content data to said one data terminal.

22. (currently amended) The ~~entertainment~~ system as claimed in claim 17, wherein each one of said plurality of data terminals is operable to record a timing for receiving the content data prior to receiving the content data when setting the user-set content distribution schedule~~, and the order of transmission is at least partly determined by the recorded timings of said plurality of data terminals~~.

23. (currently amended) The ~~entertainment~~ system as claimed in claim 22, wherein each one of said plurality of data terminals is operable to request said data server to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data in accordance with the ~~recorded~~ timing recorded by that data terminal.

24. (currently amended) The ~~entertainment~~ system as claimed in claim 22, wherein said data server is operable to ~~record the timings and to transmit~~distribute the content data to said plurality of data terminals in accordance with the ~~recorded~~ timings recorded by said plurality of data terminals.

25. (currently amended) The ~~entertainment~~ system as claimed in claim 17, wherein each one of said plurality of data terminals is further operable to store the content data received from said data server prior to performing said at least one of reproducing ~~said~~ the program or executing the program.

26. (currently amended) A data server, comprising:

~~a database storing a plurality of priorities assigned to users of a plurality of data terminals; and~~

communication means operable to ~~transmit~~ distribute content data to ~~the~~ a plurality of data terminals over an electronic data network, the content data including at least one of reproducible program content data for reproduction of a

program including at least one of audio or video by one of the plurality of data terminals or executable program content data for execution of a program by one of the plurality of data terminals in accordance with input from a user, said communication means being operable to distribute ~~transmit~~ the content data to ones of the plurality of data terminals over the electronic data network ~~in an order of transmission at least partly determined by at least one of the stored priorities or a state of congestion of the electronic data network.~~ in accordance with respective user-set content distribution schedules set by distribution requests of users of the ones of the plurality of data terminals, and being operable to determine whether the electronic data network is congested before distributing the content data, such that when the communication means determines that the electronic data network is not congested, the communication means distributes the content data to the ones of the plurality of data terminals according to the respective user-set content distribution schedules.

27. (currently amended) The data server as claimed in claim 26, wherein when the state of congestion of the electronic data network is congested, the data server is operable to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data in ~~the~~ an order of ~~transmission~~ distribution to a first set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a first priority before the data server ~~transmits~~ distributes the content data to a second set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a second priority.

28. (currently amended) The data server as claimed in claim 26, wherein the data server is operable to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data corresponding to a user-selected program to one of the plurality of data terminals in accordance with the respective user-set content distribution schedule in

response to receiving a request from the one data terminal for the user-selected program.

29. (currently amended) The data server as claimed in claim 28, wherein the content data corresponds to a plurality of independently selectable programs, ~~said~~ the data server further comprising a storage unit operable to store the content data, said communication means ~~further~~ being further operable to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data corresponding to the user-selected program to the one data terminal which requests the user-selected program, and to distribute the content data from the content data stored in said storage unit.

30. (currently amended) The data server as claimed in claim 26, further comprising a database, ~~wherein~~ the database ~~stores~~ being operable to store a plurality of timings for ~~transmitting~~ distributing the content data to each of the plurality of data terminals in accordance with the respective user-set content distribution schedules of the ones of the plurality of data terminals, and said communication means ~~is~~ being further operable to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data to the plurality of data terminals in accordance with the recorded timings when said communication means determines that the electronic data network is not congested.

31. (currently amended) A method for distributing content data, comprising:

~~assigning a plurality of priorities to users of a plurality of data terminals; and~~

determining by a data server whether an electronic data network operable to connect the data server to a plurality of data terminals is congested; and

~~transmitting~~ when the data server determines that the electronic data network is not congested before distributing

content data, distributing the content data from ~~a~~ the data server to ones of the plurality of data terminals over ~~an~~ the electronic data network in accordance with respective user-set content distribution schedules set by distribution requests of users of the ones of the plurality of data terminals ~~in an order of transmission at least partly determined by at least one of: a plurality of assigned priorities, or a state of congestion of the electronic data network~~,

wherein the content data includes at least one of reproducible program content data for reproduction of a program including at least one of audio or video by one of the plurality of data terminals or executable program content data for execution of a program by one of the plurality of data terminals in accordance with input from a user.

32. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 31, wherein when the data server determines that ~~state of congestion of~~ the electronic data network is congested, the content data is ~~transmitted~~ distributed from the data server in ~~the~~ an order of ~~transmission~~ distribution to a first set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a first priority before the content data is ~~transmitted~~ distributed from the data server to a second set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a second priority.

33. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising receiving selection input from a user at one of the plurality of data terminals for selecting a program, and requesting the user-selected program from the data server ~~by the one of the plurality of data terminals~~, wherein the step of ~~transmitting~~ distributing includes ~~transmitting~~ distributing the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from the data server to the one of the plurality of data terminals which

requests the user-selected program according to the user-set content distribution schedule of the respective user.

34. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 33, further comprising storing by the data server content data corresponding to a plurality of independently selectable programs, ~~by the data server~~ and the step of ~~transmitting~~ distributing includes ~~transmitting~~ distributing the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from the content data stored ~~on~~ by the data server to the one of the plurality of data terminals.

35. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising recording in each of the plurality of data terminals a timing for receiving the content data when setting the respective user-set content distribution schedule and receiving the ~~transmitted~~ distributed content data in the plurality of data terminals, the timings being recorded prior to the plurality of data terminals receiving the content data, wherein ~~the~~ an order of ~~transmission~~ distribution from the data server to the plurality of data terminals is at least partly determined by the timings recorded in the plurality of data terminals.

36. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 35, further comprising requesting the data server to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data ~~by each of the plurality of data terminals,~~ in accordance with the timing recorded by each data terminal.

37. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising recording by the data server timings for ~~transmitting~~ distributing the content data to individual data terminals of the plurality of data terminals ~~by the data server~~ and transmitting the timings to the individual data terminals, wherein the content data is ~~transmitted~~ distributed to the

individual data terminals in accordance with the recorded timings.

38. (previously presented) The method as claimed in claim 31, further comprising storing the content data received from the data server in the plurality of data terminals and thereafter performing at least one of reproducing the program or executing the program.

39. (currently amended) A machine-readable recording medium having information recorded thereon for use by a machine in performing a method for distributing content data, the method comprising:

~~assigning a plurality of priorities to users of a plurality of data terminals; and~~

determining by a data server whether an electronic data network operable to connect the data server to a plurality of data terminals is congested; and

~~transmitting~~ when the data server determines that the electronic data network is not congested before distributing content data, distributing the content data from ~~a~~ the data server to ones of the plurality of data terminals over ~~an~~ the electronic data network in accordance with respective user-set content distribution schedules set by distribution requests of users of the ones of the plurality of data terminals ~~in an order of transmission at least partly determined by at least one of: a plurality of assigned priorities, or a state of congestion of the electronic data network~~,

wherein the content data includes at least one of reproducible program content data for reproduction of a program including at least one of audio or video by one of the plurality of data terminals or executable program content data for

execution of a program by one of the plurality of data terminals in accordance with input from a user.

40. (currently amended) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein when the data server determines that ~~state of congestion of~~ the electronic data network is congested, the content data is ~~transmitted~~ distributed from the data server in ~~the~~ an order of ~~transmission~~ distribution to a first set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a first priority before the content data is ~~transmitted~~ distributed from the data server to a second set of the plurality of data terminals used by users assigned a second priority.

41. (currently amended) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises receiving selection input from a user at one of the plurality of data terminals for selecting a program~~,~~ and requesting the user-selected program from the data server ~~by the one of the plurality of data terminals~~, wherein the step of ~~transmitting~~ distributing includes ~~transmitting~~ distributing the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from the data server to the one of the plurality of data terminals which requests the user-selected program according to the user-set content distribution schedule of the respective user.

42. (currently amended) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises storing by the data server content data corresponding to a plurality of independently selectable programs, ~~by the data server~~ and the step of ~~transmitting~~ distributing includes ~~transmitting~~ distributing the content data corresponding to the user-selected program from the content data stored ~~on~~ by the data server to the one of the plurality of data terminals.

43. (currently amended) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises recording in each of the plurality of data terminals a timing for receiving the content data when setting the respective user-set content distribution schedule and receiving the ~~transmitted~~ distributed content data in the plurality of data terminals, the timings being recorded prior to the plurality of data terminals receiving the content data, wherein ~~the~~ an order of ~~transmission~~ distribution from the data server to the plurality of data terminals is at least partly determined by the timings recorded in the plurality of data terminals.

44. (currently amended) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 43, wherein the method further comprises requesting the data server to ~~transmit~~ distribute the content data ~~by each of the plurality of data terminals,~~ in accordance with the timing recorded by each data terminal.

45. (currently amended) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises recording by the data server timings for ~~transmitting~~ distributing the content data to individual data terminals of the plurality of data terminals ~~by the data server~~ and transmitting the timings to the individual data terminals, wherein the content data is ~~transmitted~~ distributed to the individual data terminals in accordance with the recorded timings.

46. (previously presented) The machine-readable recording medium as claimed in claim 39, wherein the method further comprises storing the content data received from the data server in the plurality of data terminals and thereafter performing the at least one of reproducing the program or executing the program.

47. (new) The system for distributing content data as claimed in claim 17, wherein said data server includes a database for storing individual information regarding individual levels of users of said plurality of data terminals, such that when the electronic data network is congested said data server is operable to obtain the individual information regarding the individual levels of the users of said plurality of data terminals and to distribute the content data to at least some of the users in accordance with the respective user-set content distribution schedules when the individual levels of the at least some users are high.

48. (new) The system for distributing content data as claimed in claim 47, wherein when the electronic data network is congested, said data server is operable to periodically monitor the individual information regarding the individual levels to determine whether to distribute the content data in accordance with the respective user-set content distribution schedules.

49. (new) The system for distributing content data as claimed in claim 17, wherein when said data server makes a determination not to distribute the content data to a respective one of said plurality of data terminals in accordance with the respective user-set content distribution schedule, said data server is operable to transmit determination information to the respective data terminal indicating that determination.